

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
December 3, 2012

The Hartwell City Council met in regular session on Monday, December 3, 2012 beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers of city hall with all members present. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Jennifer Scott.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance to U. S. Flag, the invocation was given by City Manager David Aldrich.

Mayor Scott welcomed students from Matt Beasley's High School Government Class.

The Mayor announced that the "Second Helping" meal sponsored by Miss Haleigh Lewis would again be held December 13th at the Hartwell First United Methodist Church. Volunteers are also needed to assist with the meals and anyone interested may contact the church.

The Mayor also announced that City Hall would be closed Monday and Tuesday, December 24th and 25th for Christmas holidays, and again on New Year's Day. She reminded everyone to be safe during the holiday season, and take the opportunity to give back to others.

Hearing no additions or corrections to the minutes of the November 5, 2012 public hearing, a motion was made by Councilman Billy Ethridge to approve as recorded. Motion was seconded by Councilman Arthur Craft and carried unanimously.

Hearing no additions or corrections to the minutes of the November 5, 2012 regular council meeting, a motion was made by Councilman Ethridge to approve as recorded. Motion was seconded by Councilman Tony Haynie and carried unanimously.

Ms. Judy Melton reported that the Hart Community Food Ministry was a new organization established to help break the cycle of hunger in the community by offering food and support to low-income families. She stated that the receiving families had to meet certain guidelines as well as attend orientation.

Upon recommendation of the City Logo Committee, a motion was made by Councilman Tray Hicks to extend the contest for a new City logo for another ninety days. Motion was seconded by Councilman David Little and carried unanimously. Councilman Hicks stated that only three submissions had been received to date.

Councilman Little encouraged the community to support the Hart County Health Department by utilizing their services. He stated that due to the struggling economy, the Health Department is also suffering financially. He further stated that the Health Department did a great service for the community, and could use the community's help. Families are helped by the Department and they are always willing to go to businesses or schools to offer their services, such as providing flu shots, etc.

A motion was made by Councilman Haynie to set the City's tax millage rate at 11.3. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously.

Councilman Little explained that during the budget process the City determined that it would not be able to fund a full-time animal control officer. Due to this determination, he recommended that the Animal Control Committee stand down until a later date as the economy improves. The City Manager reported that the City would continue to use the current part-time individual to pick up animals and transport to the Northeast Georgia Animal Shelter in Lavonia. The City also has a holding facility until animals can be transported to Lavonia. As reported by Councilman Little, upon a recent inspection of the City's holding facility, it was stated by the inspector that if all facilities were as good as Hartwell's, they would have no problems. Councilman Little commended the City Manager and staff for doing a very good job in this area.

The second reading of Ordinance No. 2012-05, which adopts the 2013 budget, was deferred until December 6, 2012, at which time a budget public hearing will be held at 6:30 p.m., followed by a called meeting at 7:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Craft, and carried unanimously to approve a beer/wine license for Sanjaykumar Patel , new owner of Handy Pantry located on W. Franklin Street.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilman Ethridge, and carried unanimously to approve all renewal applications for alcohol licenses.

A motion was made by Councilman Haynie, seconded by Councilman Hicks, and carried unanimously to table discussion regarding the Recycling Services Agreement. Councilman Haynie felt the City should also obtain quotes from other sources for the recycling services.

The City Manager explained that Oakview Crossing was seeking a Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG) loan through Hart Electric Membership Corporation, which is typically sponsored by a government entity. He stated that this loan was structured the same as the City's Revolving Loan Fund, with payments to be made by Oakview Crossing or the Development Corporation. However, if something happened with the project, the City would be responsible for repayment of the loan, but would also take a second position behind the bank's position. Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to allow the City Manager to enter into discussions on a resolution for the loan. Motion was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously.

Mayor Scott reported that many of the surrounding areas already received 8% hotel/motel tax, and it was her desire to increase the City's hotel/motel sales tax collection from 5% to 8%. Upon seeking Council's approval for proceeding with drafting a Resolution to increase the hotel/motel sales tax, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to approve the drafting of a Resolution to increase the hotel/motel tax from 5% to 8%. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and

carried unanimously. The Resolution would then be submitted to local legislation, designating the projects to be funded by the tax.

A motion was made by Councilman Craft, seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously to allow the Fire Chief to begin developing specs for a new fire engine. As stated by the City Manager, the prepared specs would come before Council for approval, followed by a bid process.

The City Manager reported that the gas main replacement on Hwy. 77 had been completed. Old steel gas mains have been replaced on Brown and Smith Streets, and continue to be replaced on Laurel Street and Memorial Road. He also reported that sewer mains continued to be videoed to locate critical areas of infiltration and inflow. New computers for city hall have been installed and working, and desktop computers and laptops have arrived for the Police Department. He further reported that City crews have begun picking up leaves and continue to try to keep up, which can be challenging this time of year.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to adjourn the meeting at approximately 7:45 p.m. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Turner
City Clerk